



# **Parents As Learning Support (PALS)**

## **Parent Involvement Matching Grants**

### **Application Guidelines and Instructions**

**Application Deadline: June 29, 2007**

City of Las Vegas  
Neighborhood Services Department

**City of Las Vegas**  
**Parents As Learning Support (PALS)**  
**Parent Involvement Matching Grants**

**Program Guidelines**

**Introduction**

Parents and families are vital resources in a student's academic success. Studies show that when families get involved in their children's education, grades and test scores improve. Children become more likely to meet school achievement benchmarks, and go on to pursue college. Parent participation also helps children to develop better social skills, high self-esteem, and reduce the likelihood of drugs and alcohol usage.

PALS Matching Grants are designed to make parents and school staff partners in defining and addressing the needs of their school and the children it serves. Using PALS funding, schools and parents can bring resources, training and tools to their school community to turn their schools into nurturing environments for children and families to grow, learn in the classroom and after school hours.

Teams of parents, teachers and school staff from eligible elementary schools are invited to apply for matching grants up to \$8,000. Applications will be rated based their goals and anticipated outcomes, the level of parent involvement in project planning, implementation and participation, and the school's ability to sustain parent involvement after the grant cycle has concluded. Schools within the city of Las Vegas boundaries will be considered first when allocating PALS funding.

Grant amounts requested must be matched, dollar for dollar with parent participation hours, volunteer labor and/or community donations. Participation and volunteer hours are valued at \$15 per hour. Donated supplies and materials are given market value.

**Goals:**

PALS Matching Grants support school based strategies that:

- Establish parents and school staff as partners in defining and addressing student needs
- Identify unengaged parents and develop strategies for involving them in school activities
- Improve student achievement
- Involve parents in a variety of functions/roles in the school

- Create a support system of families, school staff and community leaders who take responsibility for the safety and well-being of all students attending their school

### **Requirements for receiving PALS Funding**

- Grant activity-planning teams must include a minimum of three (3) parents whose students currently attend the applying school.
- The number of school staff on a grant activity planning team cannot exceed the number of parents
- Parent organizations cannot discriminate in the admission of members to their association

### **Eligible Projects**

PALS will award grants for school-based strategies that increase parent participation and student achievement. To receive funding, parent volunteers and school staff must work together to develop a series of classrooms and out of school-time activities that incorporate the following components:

- **Parent/School Communication Projects** – projects that increase the amount of information parents receive concerning school performance and activities and/or allow school staff to communicate more effectively with and learn more about the families represented in their school

Projects can include:

- Family needs assessments - surveys to determine the needs and interests of school families and children, door-to door assessments, mail outs, etc.
- Activities to increase communication between parents and school staff - newsletters, websites, progress reports, parent teacher meetings

- **Health and Safety Programs** – projects that increase school and family safety and promote the health and well being of children and their families

Projects can include:

- Childhood obesity prevention (nutrition) - cooking classes, training on how to read food labels, community gardens)
- Childhood obesity prevention (fitness) - walking clubs, hikes and nature walks, school based exercise classes, youth sports programs
- Walking school busses- groups of children who walk to and from home to school each morning quickly and safely under the guidance of trained adult supervisors
- Fire Safety – programs teaching students the importance of fire prevention and safety at home, in school and in the community

- **Academic Reinforcement Initiatives** – projects that promote learning beyond classroom instruction

Projects can include:

- After-school activities - family reading or movie nights, student performances science and math clubs, homework clubs, educational field trips
- At-home learning projects for parents - workshops and materials to show parents how to check homework, support literacy, develop their child's oral communication skills, increase their child's proficiency in math and science

- **Parent Development and Training** – leadership and team building opportunities for school staff and parents to help them work together for school and student success.

Projects can include:

- Activities to sustain parent involvement - parent organization non-profit certification, training, idea kits/resource materials
- Conferences, workshops and retreats to discuss school curriculum, school planning and student assessments

Personal improvement seminars and classes offering parenting skills, literacy and English as a Second Language (ESL) courses

#### **PALS funding cannot be used for:**

- Salaries and/or overtime
- Projects identified with political parties of any kind
- General contributions to capital campaigns
- Operating deficits or retirement of debt
- Endowment programs

### **Matching Criteria**

Applicants must pledge and then secure resources to match the funds they request. Matches may include: Volunteer labor, cash donations, donated supplies, equipment, or professional services. These match elements may be blended together to make the required total match.

#### **Volunteer Hours**

- Volunteer hours from school parents are **mandatory**.
- To ensure parent involvement, at least 50 percent of the matching amount must be volunteer or participation hours from parents and family members whose children attend the applying school.

- Volunteer and participation hours can represent 100 percent of the matching amount.

### **Pledged Business Donations and Professional Services; Donated Supplies and Equipment**

- Applicants must have **Letters of Intent** for each business and professional pledging time or money to the project. If checks are collected as pledges, copies of these checks must be attached to the application with its corresponding **Letter of Intent**.
- The value of professional services counted toward the match shall be based upon the reasonable and customary value of the service rendered.
- Borrowed equipment such as computers or trucks may be used as match. The value of the equipment is set at the amount that would have been paid to rent the equipment for the work performed.

### **Evaluation Committee and Criteria**

A selection committee consisting of representatives from the city of Las Vegas' Neighborhood and Leisure Services, the Clark County School District and area Parent Teacher Associations will review all applications and determine which school projects will receive funding. Projects will be rated based on:

- ◆ Goals and anticipated outcomes
- ◆ Level of parent involvement in project planning, implementation
- ◆ Opportunities for parent participation
- ◆ Proposed match
- ◆ School's ability to sustain parent involvement after the grant cycle has concluded

# **PALS Grant Application Instructions**

## **Section I: School Information**

- Item A:** Enter the contact information for the applying school
- Item B:** Enter the total number of students enrolled in your school this year
- Item C:** Enter your school's mission statement
- Item D:** Does your school receive funding under Title 1 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (No Child Left Behind)? If yes, please include a copy of your school parent involvement policy and parent/school compact.
- Item E:** Enter the percentage of students in your school this year that participate in the free/reduced lunch program.
- Item F:** Check the box stating whether or not your school was listed as In Need of Improvement or on the Watch List for the 2006 school year.
- Item G:** Enter the preferred contact information for your school's principal. This information may be the same as the school's contact information.

## **Section II: Grant Request Summary**

- Item A:** Enter the total amount your school is requesting from PALS.
- Item B:** Enter the total value of volunteer hours your school is pledging for all of your PALS funded projects.
- Item C:** Enter the total value of participation hours your school is pledging for all of your PALS funded projects.
- Item D:** Enter the total value of the donations your school will receive towards the completion of all of your PALS projects.

## **Section III: Grant Planning Committee**

- Item A:** Each PALS School Planning Team must designate a parent and a member of the school staff to serve as the School Planning Team Leaders. The Planning Team Leaders will serve as the primary contacts for your school's PALS activities and will approve all spending of your PALS grant funds. Enter their names and contact information.

- Item B:** Enter the names of all of the remaining members of your school's Planning Team. (Remember, planning teams must have a minimum of three parents whose student(s) currently attend your school, and the number of school staff serving on the planning team cannot exceed the number of parents.)

#### **Section IV: Current Parent Involvement**

- Item A:** Give a brief description of your school's current level and quality of parent involvement. (Please be frank and genuine in your assessment. This information will not negatively affect your application.)
- Item B:** Check the box stating whether or not your school has an active parent organization (PTA, PTO, or Parent Center). If your school does not have an active parent organization, proceed to **Item J** of this section.
- Item C:** Enter the name of your school's parent organization. If available, attach a copy of your parent organization's bylaws or guidelines, a copy of their budget for this fiscal year, and a copy of their current treasurer's report.
- Item D:** Enter the number of active parents in your school's parent organization.
- Item E:** List the primary source of funding for your school's parent organization. (Fundraisers, community donations, grants, parent dues, etc.)
- Item F:** List how often your school's parent organization meets.
- Item G:** Describe the last project or activity your school's parent organization planned and implemented. Please include the date, reasons for the project or activity and whether or not the project or activity accomplished its intended goals.
- Item H:** Describe how the project/activity listed in Item G was funded?
- Item I:** List how many parents participated in the project/activity listed in Item G.
- Item J:** List the five main reasons you feel more of your school's parents do not participate in school activities.

- Item K:** Check the box stating whether or not your school received PALS funding last year. If yes, please complete the PALS Grant Evaluation section of your application packet. If no, please proceed to the next section.

## **Section V: Projects**

**Please note: Section V is not included in the body of the application. It is a separate section. Please complete a separate copy of Section V for each of the projects your school plans to implement using PALS funding. There is no limit to the number of projects your school may submit, as long as the total grant amount requested for all projects combined does not exceed \$8,000.**

- Item A:** List the number for this project in the series of projects your school will implement using PALS funding (Example: Project 1 of 5)
- Item B:** List the name of the school planning team member that will serve as the coordinator for this project. Please be sure their contact information is listed in **Section II** of your PALS grant application.
- Item C:** List the name of this project.
- Item D:** Check the box that best describes the category for your project.
- Item E:** Enter the total amount of PALS funding needed to implement this project.
- Item F:** Enter the total number of parents you think will participate in this project.
- Item G:** Enter the total amount of all donations your school has or will receive for the implementation of this project.
- Item H:** Write a detailed description of this project. Please include: how this project will benefit students and parents, the project location, proposed dates, how the school planning team will be involved in the project planning and implementation, and any donations your school has or will receive to implement this project and how the donations will be used (if any). (PALS funding will not be available for spending until September 2007 and all grant funds must be spent by June 2008. Please keep this in mind when you are planning your project and activity dates.)
- Item I:** Check the box that describes how often this project will take place.



- Item J:** Please describe the goals and outcomes the school planning team hopes to accomplish through this project.
- Item K:** Describe the school, student or family need this project will address.
- Item L:** Describe how this project will increase parent participation in your school.
- Item M:** Describe your plan for continued parent involvement upon completion of this project.
- Item N:** List all of the items you will purchase with PALS grant funding, including the quantity and cost. Add additional lines or sheets of paper as needed. Be as thorough as possible; don't just guess prices, go out and get actual costs. Once the budget is submitted, it is considered final. Budget modifications made after the grant application has been submitted must be approved by the PALS grant coordinator.
- Item O:** Use this worksheet to document volunteer hours. School staff and parents who donate time to plan and implement project activities are considered volunteers. List the volunteer hours your planning team anticipates they will need for each project activity from planning to implementation. This includes times when the committee members will meet to discuss and plan project activities.
- Item P:** Use this worksheet to document parent participation hours. Any time you anticipate parents will spend participating in or receiving services from your project activities should be listed as participation hours. Estimate the number of parents you feel will participate in each activity and the number of hours their participation will yield towards the participation match.
- Item Q:** List all donations your school will receive towards the implementation and completion of this project including: donations of professional services, cash donations from other grants, the school budget, and outside sources and donated supplies/materials from the school or outside sources. If this project is an extension of an existing project, you must list all of the existing projects operational costs here as well.

A Letter of Intent must be signed and completed by a representative from each organization that has agreed to make a

donation to this project. Without a signed Letter of Intent, donations will not be counted towards the required grant match.

### **Section VI: Funding Match**

Each school is required to match the amount they receive from PALS with volunteer hours, donated cash and/or supplies and materials. List the total amounts from all submitted projects and add them together for your Grand Total Match. The amount of the Grand Total match must equal or exceed the total amount requested from PALS.

### **Section VII: Non-Profit Status**

Attach a copy of your schools nonprofit certificate or documentation.

### **Section VIII: Certification**

List the name of the School Planning Team member who will be responsible for your group's project funds and donations. Have this person sign and date in the appropriate spaces.

Enter signatures and dates from the Parent Project Leader, the School Staff Project Leader, and your school's principal.